



Rosemary Lehmberg ★ Travis County District Attorney

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Travis County District Attorney Rosemary Lehmberg, in cooperation with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), today announced the creation of an environmental crimes prosecutor. The assistant district attorney will be housed in Travis County but will prosecute cases throughout the state. The Travis County District Attorney's Office has statewide venue on most environmental crimes under the Texas Water Code and Health and Safety Code.

Lehmberg has appointed Patty Robertson, an experienced white collar crime prosecutor, to fill the position.

"The prosecution of crimes against the environment is a priority for my office. This new funding, thanks to the cooperative effort of the TCEQ, will enable us to target the most egregious offenders. Patty Robertson, who has both the experience and commitment to protecting the environment, was a clear choice for the job," said Travis County District Attorney Rosemary Lehmberg.

Since 1994, the Travis County District Attorney's Office has worked with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the Texas Environmental Task Force in the investigation and prosecution of environmental crimes occurring throughout the State of Texas. The offenses have included the illegal storage and transportation of hazardous waste, the unauthorized discharge of waste and pollutants into the waters of the state, fraud involving TCEQ programs, public drinking water violations and illegal dumping.

The Travis County District Attorney's Office has secured restitution in the amount of \$641,089 in cases it has prosecuted since 2001. A large portion of this restitution is reimbursement for clean-up costs.

The new position is funded by a grant from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. The specialized prosecutor will seek to provide consistency in charges filed and case resolutions as well as a shorter time frame in the indictment and disposition of environmental cases across the state.

"Establishing a full-time presence at the Travis County District Attorney's Office, solely for the prosecution of environmental crimes, will ensure that criminal offenses against our natural resources will be dealt with swiftly and effectively," said TCEQ Executive Director Mark Vickery.

"We are all responsible for the safekeeping of our natural resources. Each of us is a victim when individual and corporate polluters disregard that responsibility," concluded Lehmberg.

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